

concerns about the effects of modifying current ownership laws on local radio
To: The Secretary, FCC Commissioners, and Chief, Media Bureau:
I am extremely concerned about the results of the FCC's Biennial Review,
to be announced early this June.

I understand that the current laws governing market-share ownership may now be in need of modification or rethinking all together (I don't know how applicable they are to the internet, for example). In principle, I am not opposed to these laws changing.

Nevertheless, as a radio listener I remember vividly the direct negative effects of the changes in FCC regulation from the mid 1990s. These changes drastically affected the quality of the programming of my favorite Washington, DC radio stations. I was fortunate enough to leave for college shortly after these changes took place, and I attended a college with a long tradition of independence behind its radio station.

My concerns about the impending changes are twofold:

1) given my previous experience, I doubt that loosening current ownership laws will promote a vibrant, diverse, and locally-relevant radio culture -- that is, one with genuine choices for the radio listener/consumer -- among radio stations currently owned by large media conglomerates, which culture I believe the FCC has among its aims; and

2) loosening these rules will make it increasingly hard for local, independently-owned broadcasters to maintain their autonomy in the face of the economic pressures large, national media conglomerates can place on them.

Again, I appreciate the FCC's efforts to keep their regulations current in the face of enormous changes in the way the American populace communicates and experiences its world. I ask that the FCC make certain that its proposed regulatory changes result in more choices (and more choices in Content, not just format) for the media consumer, not fewer, and that it seeks as much first-hand (ie -- direct from the consumer's mouth) information as possible when making these changes.

Many thanks for your ear,

Patrick Thrasher